GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1306
ANSWERED ON:26.11.2001
HARNESSING OF WATER RESOURCES
AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have formulated any programme to harness the water from natural resources for irrigation purposes; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government during the last three years and in the current year till-date in regard thereto?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SMT. BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY)

(a) & (b) The National Water Policy (1987) recognizes water as one of the most crucial elements in development planning. Itprovides for planning and management of country's water resources on a sustainable basis. The policy recognizes drainage basin as the basic unit of planning for development of water resources and calls for appropriate measures to optimize utilization of this resources, Irrigation being a state subject, the responsibility of survey and investigations, planning, funding, execution and management of all types of water resources projects including flood control and drainage to harness the water resources within the States primarily rests with the concerned State Government according to their own priorities and from their own plan resources.

Development of water resources in the country since independence has resulted in an increase of foodgrain production from less than 50 million tonnes to 200 million tonnes in 1999. This has been made possible with the creation of a live storage capacity of 177 Billion Cubic Metre (BCM) by construction of large dams upto 1995.With the help of these storages created and other minor irrigation schemes, an irrigation potential of 90 million hectare (Mha) has been created up to the end of the Eighth Plan against the ultimate irrigation potential of 139.9 Mha in the country.

To help the State Governments in their efforts to harness the water from natural resources and accelerate creation of irrigation potential, Government of India has launched Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP) since 1996-97. Under the programme, financial assistance in form of repayable loan is being extended to State Governments to help them complete the ongoing irrigation projects in a time bound manner so that the benefits could accrue at the earliest. Accordingly, the Central Loan Assistance (CLA) to the State Governments have been provided under AIBP amounting toRs. 4425.857 crore during the last three years upto the end of March, 2001 and Rs. 808.845 crore have also been released during the current year out of the total budget outlay of Rs. 2000 crore for CLA under AIBP. Additional irrigation potential of 706.342 thousand hectare upto the end of 1999-2000 has been created under AIBP. Assistance is also being extended to State Governments under Command Area Development (CAD)Programme for bridging the gap between potential created and utilized. An expenditure of Rs. 486.20 crore has been incurred during the last three years upto the end of March, 2001 under CAD programmeand an outlay of Rs. 187.19 crore has been provided for the year 2001-2002. Government of India is also promoting rain water harvesting through Watershed Management programme, for which technical and financial assistance is provided to the State Governments and other implementing agencies. Central Ground Water Board hasalso taken up pilot studies for artificial ground water recharge.